

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH JEAN RINEHART

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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and

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HACKETTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY

NOVEMBER 28, 2011

TRANSCRIPT BY

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and

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Ryan Masterson: This begins an interview with Jean Rinehart in Hackettstown, New Jersey, also Washington Township, Morris County, with Ryan Masterson ...

Shaun Illingworth: ... and Shaun Illingworth ...

RM: ... on November 28, 2011.

SI: Thank you very much for having us here today. Thank you also to your daughter for sitting in. Could you say your name for the record?

Jane Ellen Rinehart: Jane Ellen Rinehart.

SI: Okay, thank you very much. To begin, could you tell us where and when you were born?

Jean Rinehart: I was born in Arlington, New Jersey, on February 10, 1925, and I was the only daughter of Walter Bertram Allison and Lorette Putman Hurty Allison and I had three older brothers.

SI: What were their names?

JR: Bertram, he was a chemical engineer and he had his master's degree from Stevens [Institute of Technology in Hoboken, New Jersey] and, also, he first graduated from, what? Newark College of Engineering, he graduated from. ... Then, he got his master's from Stevens, and then, he worked for the E. I. du Pont [de] Nemours [and Company] in Arlington. ... He was transferred out to Kansas. I don't exactly know what company he worked for, but it was during the war and it was a war project that he was working on.

SI: Do you think it was still within the DuPont network of companies?

JR: I'm not sure; possibly could be, but I'm not sure. I don't know why he was sent out there; must have been something to do with the DuPont Company, but I couldn't prove it now. [laughter] ... Then, my brother Donald, he was the next oldest and he worked for New York Life ... Insurance Company for forty-one years. ... He would have been a vice-president before he retired, but he decided to retire first. [laughter] ... He was in investments and he said that they'd have a meeting every Wednesday with the chairman of the board and different members of the [board] and he said that it was in the millions [of dollars] that this company would handle, like shopping centers going up needing money, and so forth. ... Then, my brother Malcolm, he went to Rutgers, I don't know whether it was one or two years. He took up a business course and he went to Newark, to the branch there, and then, I came along and graduated from high school in June of 1943. ... Of course, my parents wanted me to go to college, like my brothers, and so, I signed up for Fairleigh Dickinson University and they had an estate, a huge home, up in Rutherford, and I think that's where they first started, to tell you the truth. ... I went up there for an interview, and so forth, and they accepted me, and then, I decided I'd rather be doing something for toward the war and I could get my education in college anytime. So, I worked for DuPont. ... Unbeknownst to all of us that worked there in the research laboratory, why, we were working on the Manhattan Project and that was quite an honor, after we found out, but, still and

all, I didn't want to talk about it after that even, because I knew it killed so many people. ... Yet, it brought our boys home from the service, which was wonderful, but, to know that so many people lost their lives because of the atomic bomb, it really was upsetting.

SI: Before we go further into your World War II experience, I would like to go back and ask about your family's history.

JR: Okay.

SI: Starting with your father's side of the family, what do you know about where the family came from and how they came to settle in Jersey City?

JR: Well, ... my Allison side of the family came over in--I think it was 1624 or 1630--and that's a long time ago. [laughter] ... I have records of the different generations, up to my father, and then, my mother's [side], they came over in the 1600s, too.

JER: Where did they come over from?

JR: Well, the Allisons came from England. They were Ellison at first, and then, I don't know why or when or where they had the Allison made. ... They changed the "E" to "A," to Allison and instead of Ellison, and then, they came from England. ... Then, my mother's people, they were on the Putman side, they came from England also and it was back in the ... 1600s and, of course, we had a Revolutionary soldier from each one, each family. ... I've been a member of the DAR [Daughters of the American Revolution] for fifty-nine years, [laughter] ... but, anyway, we have so many records on our family, that my mother, even my grandfathers, the two on both sides, kept records. ... So, I feel that I was really very lucky to have all the information that I do have, but, anyway, you wanted to know about myself.

SI: Yes, I will not ask you to recount all of your family's history on tape, but, starting with your grandparents' generation, what do you know about your father's parents?

JR: Well, my father's father was Wallace Allison and he owned a glass company in New York and he retired at thirty-eight years old, because he had so much money from the glass industry. ... They were starting to build in New York, and so forth, [laughter] and they used a lot of glass in the different buildings, but, anyway, that's my father's father. Then, my mother's father, he worked for the Erie Railroad as a telegrapher and he was manager in the Jersey City office. ... Going back to the Allison side again, my grandfather, Wallace Allison, he was born in Fort Lee, New Jersey, and then, I don't know whether--when he got married, he lived in Jersey City. That's where my father was born, and then, on my mother's side, her father's name was James Morris Hurty, H-U-R-T-Y, and he was born in Dunkirk, New York, and he married ... Mary Eleanor Boyle, that was born in, let me see, Mitchell, Ontario, Canada. ... Her family moved to Jersey City and that's how my grandfather and grandmother met, in church. So, anyway, my grandparents always ... met in church, for some reason or other, [laughter] but, anyway, I have to stop right there and think a little bit now. What would you like to know from here on?

SI: Well ...

JR: Is that enough on my grandparents?

SI: Sure. When you were growing up, did you know all of your grandparents?

JR: I didn't know my grandmothers, because my Grandmother Hurty, she died at forty-eight with a heart attack and my other grandmother, (Sarah?) Allison, ... her maiden name was Wilson, (Sarah?) Wilson Allison, she died in childbirth. So, I didn't know them at all, but always heard a lot about them, how sweet each one was, yes. [laughter]

SI: You said your grandparents on both sides met through the church.

JR: ... Yes, yes. My Grandmother Allison, ... that's (Sarah?) Wilson Allison, she was the organist for the church and my grandfather, I don't know, some way, he used to pump the bellow--pump something, [laughter] I don't know what--on an organ. In those days, they weren't electric, of course, and that's how they got together, I guess, worked together at church, yes.

SI: Wow.

JR: But, he would pump the organ or something for her while she played, yes. [laughter]

SI: That is neat.

JR: ... That's a Methodist church in Jersey City. I don't know which church, but it was a Methodist church.

SI: Okay.

JR: Yes.

SI: For both sides of the family?

JR: No. My grandmother, Mary Eleanor Boyle Hurty, she was an Episcopalian, and so was my grandfather. In fact, my mother ... and father were married in the Episcopal church in Arlington, but I don't know.

SI: Do you know how your parents met?

JR: In seventh grade in school, yes. Yes, they dated. It wasn't--they really didn't date. ... He had lost his mother when he was fourteen and my mother told me how her mother would bake a pie or a cake, especially a cake, ... for the pupils coming home from school at night or in the afternoon. ... She said that my father always liked to come and have some cake and milk, or whatever they had, tea, and he enjoyed that. ... My Grandmother Hurty, she was more or less taking over--not taking over for his mother--was [offering] a mother's caring for a person that lost their mother, yes. So, that's all before my time. [laughter]

SI: Tell us a little bit about your parents' educations.

JR: They both had their high school education. They graduated, and then, my father, he went to Newark Technical School, which became Newark College of Engineering. [Editor's Note: The Newark Technical School, founded in 1881, evolved into the Newark College of Engineering in 1919 (although its name would not change until 1930). NCE became part of the newly created New Jersey Institute of Technology in 1975.] ... I'm not sure, but I think he took two years of courses there. He went full-time, and then, Mother, she was quite a musician. She was a concert pianist, really, and I think she started taking lessons when she was five years old. ... She could really play the piano [laughter] and I know the neighbors, they said, when the windows were open in the summertime, they loved to hear her sing and play the piano, because she was so good. ... I think my daughter, Jane, has taken after her grandmother. She's been an operatic singer.

JER: One of the stories that Grandma told me was that, while she was the mother of four children, she was offered to be part of the Metropolitan Opera Company.

JR: That's right.

JER: And she had to refuse it because she had the responsibility of taking care of her children and her husband.

JR: Well, my father wasn't very happy about it. ... He felt her--a woman's--place was home, [laughter] with the children, but anyway.

SI: However, she would perform at different places.

JR: Oh, yes, yes, and, after we came along, why, she sang more in churches and as a soloist. She'd be an invited guest to sing, and she sang for the women's club in Arlington. They'd always call her, if they wanted somebody [to sing] there. ... Then, my grandfather and she, they used to go into Newark. Now, what on Earth is that called? They sang with a group there in Newark; I don't remember [the name] now.

SI: You can put it in later.

JR: ... Well, I probably won't even think of it then, because I was little, about maybe four or five years old. Mother used to take singing lessons and she used to take me and I'd have a coloring book with me. I'd color in the book and listen to my mother practicing at this woman's house in Newark, Mrs.--oh, gee, it just went out of my head, can't think of her name now [Mrs. Salyer]--but Mother always kept up her music, yes.

SI: Was music an important part of your family life?

JR: Very much so, yes, because my brothers were in the band in high school, and so forth. ... They didn't start ... playing any instrument until they got to high school. Now, they have it in grammar school, but they only did it in high school at that time, started it. ... My brother, Bert,

used to play the trumpet. [laughter] ... My two brothers, Bert and Don, they were the two older ones, why, they belonged to the Boy Scouts, and I think it was Troop 7 in Arlington. ... My brother Bert would play the bugle. Well, I got so [good that] I could play the bugle [laughter] and, this one day, I was out on our front porch, which was enclosed, and I was playing the bugle and a man was going down the street. ... He stopped and he was looking all around, trying to find out where that sound was coming from, but I'd play *Taps*. [laughter] ... I was just little. I don't think I was more than seven years old. ... He couldn't see me, really, because I was short, [laughter] and he finally found out where I was, but it was funny, watching him look all around, trying to find out who's playing the *Taps*; oh, golly. [laughter]

SI: What did your father do for a living?

JR: My father, ... well, let me see, he worked on magnetos and things like that in cars. ... He also worked for the Packard [automobile company] ... in Montclair, New Jersey, and my family, my brothers and my father, all had Packards. ... The young girls, I think, liked my brothers because they thought they had money, but they didn't have money, because of the Packards. [laughter] ... With Dad working in the Packard [in] Montclair, why, he could get them at a reasonable price, but they were all used cars. In fact, here's a picture of my brother's 1928 seven-passenger touring car. [laughter]

SI: Wow.

JR: And that was something. Well, my dad and mother, they always rented a place in the country. So, we could go there [in the] summers and we'd go there [on] weekends, too, that ... the weather was pleasant enough, and Dad always had a garden. ... That was before they decided to have Victory gardens, during the war. Dad always had a garden. ... Of course, we kids would be up there with Mother and Mother would do canning, take up canning, ... from the vegetables that we had in the garden, and then, we'd get different fruit, like peaches and apples, and so [on], from other farmers. ... Mother would make up the applesauce, can it and [cook it] over a wood stove. ... The one house we were in, the ceilings were so low, they had, like, a wooden ceiling in the kitchen, and, oh, I can see my poor mother sweating so from the heat of that stove and the low ceiling. It's a wonder she didn't pass out. ... That's where she would cook and do her canning of the different vegetables, and so forth.

SI: She was doing that long before the war.

JR: Oh, yes, and during the war, and then, when they brought out the freezer, Mother would freeze the different vegetables, and so forth, but this one place, that was owned by a Martin Rinehart and [who] was a cousin to my father-in-law, ... we were there for twenty-one years before they needed the home for a tenant, because they had a farm and this was a tenant house, and so, I'll stop there; another question?

SI: When were you in that house? Was it after you were married?

JR: This is before I was married, and before and during the war.

SI: Growing up, your parents rented a home owned by your future father-in-law's cousin.

JR: Yes, that's right. I know, one Thanksgiving, it had snowed and my brothers went ahead. They were able to drive at that time, my older brother especially. ... They came up to the country and we had a pot-bellied stove in the living room. ... They told my mother, they said, "We'll have the house nice and warm, so that you can come up." Mother didn't know, with the snow, and so forth, whether they could make it. So, we had to walk, Mother and Dad and I, and my brother Malcolm, he was small, too, ... the four of us walked a mile into where we had our summer home. ... [laughter] When we got there, it's a wonder my brothers didn't burn the house down. It was so hot, we had to open up the windows, [laughter] but they wanted to make sure Mother would be warm when we got there. ... The reason my mother and dad and I and my brother Malcolm came later was because Dad had to work. ... That was another thing--there was ice on top, a crust on top of the snow. ... My mother, she would break through the snow every once in a while, the ice, the top of the snow, that crust, and, when she got down to the house, why, as I say, we had to walk about a mile. ... We had a sled, too, and I was on the sled and they were pulling me with the food on the sled. [laughter] It was quite a big, what is it, Flyer? What do they call it? It was a Flyer.

SI: Radio Flyer?

JR: Whatever they called it, something Flyer. ... My dad would pull me, but, well, that was quite an experience. We had lots of experiences on that farm, and then, how I met my husband was, he lived on a farm, too. When he died, it'd been in the family for about two hundred years, but, anyway, they had a large pond and a tennis court and I loved to play tennis. This is after I graduated from high school, and so forth, and after the war. ... They had a farm with a tennis court and this big pond and we used to go down there [for] swimming a lot--when we were kids, too. ... I know my husband's father, his name was John Emmitt Rinehart, he would sit on their front porch and watch the swimmers, [because] he was always afraid that somebody would drown. So, he was always there ... in case they needed help. ... He would charge outsiders, outside of town, ten cents apiece, for [to] go swimming, and they had boats, ... three different boats, that were, what do you call that? like triangular, came to a point. Three-sided, that's what I want to say, three-sided boats. ... Well, anyway, we would go down there swimming. ... My brother, of course, we were city people, but we had the summer home up above, at his cousin's, and my father-in-law, he used to tell my brother, "You don't have to pay ten cents," he said, "when you come swimming here." He said, "Not until you get a beard as ... long as I have." Well, he didn't have a very long beard, but he told my brother he didn't have to pay ten cents until he had a beard. [laughter] So, anyway, then, as I say, ... I loved to play tennis and, of course, my husband, he saw this girl out there, playing tennis, and he got interested. [laughter] He asked me five times, five different weekends, if I'd go out on a date and I said, "No." So, finally, I told my mother and she said, "Well, why don't you break down and go out once with him anyway?" So, that was it, that was the beginning of our romance, and, six months later, we were married.

SI: That was 1947 or 1948.

JR: '48, I got married, yes, February of '48. ... My husband, John Alfred Rinehart, was born on February 7, 1912, and I was born thirteen years later, on February 10, 1925, and we were married on February 14, 1948. So, everything was in February.

SI: That is convenient.

JR: Then, my older daughter, Jean Rinehart, she was born on February 11th, the day after I had my birthday. ... Little Jane Ellen, that's sitting here right now, she always felt so sad because she didn't have any birthday in February. ... I used to tell her that she had the most beautiful time of the year. Her birthday is June 18, 1955, and I used to tell her, "You have the most beautiful time of the year to have a birthday, with roses and flowers, and so forth." Well, I don't know whether that helped her or not, but, anyway, how was that Jane? [laughter]

JER: I had the best birthday parties.

JR: Yes, always had birthday parties, and I used to have some for Valentine's Day, too, for your class. Oh, we've had the classes come to the farm, yes. We owned 140 acres and my husband ran a dairy and it was a lot of work. ...

JER: But, he was with American Airlines before that.

JR: Yes. He worked fourteen years for American Airlines. In fact, he was a pioneer of the airline, American Airlines. In fact, he had a certificate as a pioneer, but, let me see, where else do I go?

SI: Going back to when you were growing up, what was the neighborhood that you grew up in in Arlington like?

JR: Well, I've got to stop and think. The southern part of Arlington, now, it's known as Kearny. [Editor's Note: Arlington is a section of Kearny.] ... That was known as Kearny, the southern part of Arlington, and it was mostly Scotch people, and then, up where we lived, why, there was Italians and there was a nice Italian family that lived across the street from us. ... Their name was Rosa and they were very good to us and, of course, my father and mother reciprocated, good friends. ... Then, there's a Swedish lady ... and her husband that lived next to us. They had a daughter. Their name was (Olson?). What else? There was a family by the name of (Case?) that came from Carbondale, Pennsylvania, and I think he worked for Worthington [Pump and Machinery Corporation, in Harrison, New Jersey, directly to the south of Kearny]. So, that's why they moved to Arlington. ... Then, there was a man and his family that lived next to them, he was into real estate. ... Kormier, his name was. His sister married a King. [laughter] Well, so much of that; Mother said that when they moved there, she was just an infant; oh, maybe two years old, I'm not sure. ... Anyway, she said [that] there were only five houses on the block. Well, there were quite a few houses after that on the block. I don't know ... how much territory that is, but there were quite a few homes there when I was a kid. ... I started kindergarten in Lincoln School in Arlington, on Kearny Avenue, and I went there from kindergarten through second grade. Then, they decided to make Lincoln School a junior high. So, then, I had to go to another school, which was called Emerson School and it was, oh, ... about a good half or three-

quarters of a mile away from my house. So, I'd walk down there with other friends from school, and we went to the Emerson School from third grade through sixth grade. Then, we went back to Lincoln School again, to junior high, seventh, or sixth through eighth, and then, of course, Kearny High School. We went to Kearny High School. ... Kearny was really named after a Civil War soldier. ... I don't know whether he was a colonel or what he was, but he was killed during the war. ... His summer home is not there now, but it used to be, up on a hill. I can remember, just vaguely. I don't know whether that was Belgrove Drive. I don't remember what street that was on now. I think it was Belgrove. I don't know. I have to take that back, I'm not sure, but, anyway, so, where do we go from there? [laughter] [Editor's Note: Kearny, New Jersey, was named in honor of American Civil War General Philip Kearny, who owned an estate called Belgrove in the area, in 1867 after the town separated from Harrison, New Jersey.]

SI: Would you say that the neighborhood was mostly middle-class or working-class?

JR: Working-class, yes, yes. They were all working-class. In those days, everybody practically was working-class and not many of them went any further than high school, to tell you the truth. In fact, my father had more education than other men had. They were just plain factory workers, a lot of them, yes.

SI: It sounds like, at least in your immediate area, the different groups got along well.

JR: Oh, definitely, yes.

SI: Was that the case for most of the town, that you knew of?

JR: Oh, yes, yes. Oh, we didn't have like today. [laughter] The women stayed home and took care of the children and that was it. When we went home from school, Mom was always there and she'd always have something for us to nibble on or eat. [laughter] We were always hungry by the time we got home ... from school.

RM: Did you have any hobbies growing up, other than tennis and swimming?

JR: Oh, hobbies, got to stop and think. I know, one time, they had, in Emerson School--I think I was in third grade--why, they had a hobby show in town and I, being out in the country, in the summers, and so forth, I used to watch the birds. ... So, I decided that, for this hobby show, ... every child had to enter it, so, I decided to get a little tree, sort of, that had died, ... not very tall, and I had collected birds' nests during the fall, when the birds had left their nests, and so forth. ... I collected different types of bird nests, and then, I made drawings of birds in the colors, the different ones, cardinal and the orioles and robin's nests, and I even had a little hummingbird's nest and that was no bigger than that, just the size of a little golf ball, half a golf ball. ... They were amazed. Well, anyway, I won first prize in that, ... in that section of the hobby thing. So, in fact, I still have the blue ribbons. They don't look too blue anymore. [laughter] ... This one teacher that I had, ... her name was Miss Mulford and she was great on nature. So, that was my love, too, being exposed to being in the country in the summertime. That meant a lot to me. I saw things that other kids didn't see in the city. ... Miss Mulford, she was a lovely teacher, and then, we had a nice principal, her name was Ethel (Sanderson?). ... We kids just loved both of

them, because they were so loving to each child. They didn't favor anyone. ... They were good to all the children. So, everyone loved the two of them especially. ... Then, we got to sixth grade and there was a Miss White. ... She was very stern and the kids, boy, I'll tell you, they minded her. Today, it's really hard for a teacher. The children have no discipline whatsoever and, [if] a teacher tries to discipline, they won't listen to a teacher. They'll talk right back to them or do as they please. Anyway, it's terrible. What's the matter, Jane? You're shaking your head; [you] don't want me to get into that, huh? [laughter] Well, this is the way it goes.

SI: What subjects interested you the most?

JR: Chemistry.

SI: Chemistry.

JR: Yes. I know, my senior year, I was in my chemistry class and I came down with pneumonia and I couldn't go to school and, of course, we had a test coming up. So, I was so upset that, here I am, in bed, with pneumonia, and I can't get out ... and go to school to do this one test. ... So, I had my oldest brother Bertram's college books and the periodic table, and so forth. I saw that in it. So, I learned every one. Don't ask me what they are now, but, anyway, I learned every symbol, or whatever you call it, and, when I went back to school, I had to stay after school and take this test and I got a hundred [percent correct] in it. ... The teacher couldn't get over it. He said, "Here, you've been out," I don't know, a couple weeks, I think it was two weeks I was out of school, and he couldn't understand it. So, come to find out, he had been a teacher in Newark College of Engineering and, when I told him that I had gotten my brother's books and studied through his books, he couldn't get over it. [laughter] ... Here, I'd been out sick, and then, to come back and get a hundred in the chemistry test, he couldn't get over that. ... I enjoyed chemistry very much and I liked trigonometry. That seemed easy, but geometry, that didn't make sense to me at all. [laughter] I passed it, but I had to memorize an awful lot. ... I enjoyed history and English, yes.

SI: You mentioned that your father had this attitude that women should stay at home.

JR: That's right.

SI: He did not want your mother to go to work.

JR: Oh, yes. Most men felt that way, at that time.

SI: Did he, and your family in general, encourage you to go to college?

JR: Oh, yes. ... My mother and father were very disappointed that I didn't go, right after high school, but I felt that I'd be doing more working in the DuPont Company. It was right there in town and I could get my education ... after the war was over. ...

JER: But, you did go to Princeton University for courses, as well as Rutgers.

JR: What?

JER: You did go to Princeton University for at least two courses. ...

JR: Yes, ... just the courses, Princeton and Rutgers, yes, but the company paid for those, yes.

SI: Your family encouraged all of the kids to get as much education as they could.

JR: Oh, yes, yes.

RM: Do you remember how the Great Depression affected your neighborhood?

JR: Yes. A lot of people lost their jobs, but, then, again, there was industry on the outskirts of Arlington, in the Kearny section of it, and a lot of people, men, had their jobs, at, like, Worthington and, I don't know, others. I can't remember the different companies that were down that way, but I think most of them had jobs. My father, he worked all through the Depression, and so forth, very fortunate. ... That's when the automobile industry was starting to build up, too, but, no, my father always had a job.

SI: Do you know if he ever had his hours cut or anything like that?

JR: They used to work six days a week. ... No, he never had his hours cut and I don't think, in the neighborhood, the men had their hours cut, too, because, ... well, they had good jobs. They were factory people, but, still, they were very fortunate.

SI: Was your father ever involved in any unions?

JR: No, they didn't have unions then, not that I know of. [laughter] I never heard of unions back in those days, when he was working. They may have--I'd learn something if they did [laughter]--but I never heard of them, yes.

SI: In what other ways did the Great Depression impact your life? Did people come through your town looking for food or to do work?

JR: We didn't have anything like that, nothing like that, not like it is today, no, and, of course, the population wasn't as increased as much as it is today. ... We were all like a family on a street, went to different churches, but this Italian family went to the Presbyterian church. I used to go to the Presbyterian church. [laughter] ... I went to the Episcopal church with my grandfather and mother. In fact, when I was, oh, maybe five, seven, or something like that, they had a children's choir in the Episcopal church and I used to sing in that. ... When we came out to the country in the summers, we'd go to the Presbyterian church with the farmer's wife and her brother. They went to the Presbyterian church, so, we went to the Presbyterian church, too. We would ride with them. ... Mother, she sang in all the different churches, the Episcopal church and the Methodist and the Presbyterian. ... I don't think she ever got to the Lutheran. When I married my husband, he was Lutheran. Well, then, I finally joined the Lutheran church in Oldwick, [New Jersey]. So, I got an honor certificate from the church in Oldwick, because,

looking up records, the church records are always kept according to a date. ... If they have a birth name or a marriage or death or whatever, it was always according to the day that it happened, and so forth. ... If you were looking up a record of your ancestor, you'd spend all day there looking, for a name, because it was under a date. So, I decided that I was going to change it and put all the names alphabetically with their dates, and so forth. The name was more important, because, when you're researching, you're looking for a name, a family name. So, that's what I did and it took me four years to do it, because I was learning the computer at the same time and a program. So, I sort of made up my own program, and so, I did two hundred years of the Lutheran church in Oldwick, of records of births, baptisms, marriages and deaths. So, they were so grateful that they honored me this one day at church and had a big time and gave me several certificates. [laughter]

SI: That is great.

JR: Yes, ... but it was appreciated, because it saved the minister [time when assisting] people looking for their ancestor that was either married in the church or born there and baptized there; not born, but baptized. ... It saved him. All he'd have to do is look up a name and that was it, and not go through the dates. Some people, they ... didn't know the dates of when their ancestor was baptized or married. So, that's what I did.

SI: Growing up in the 1930s and early 1940s, were there other activities that you and your family were involved in in town, such as clubs or civic groups?

JR: [laughter] Well, I belonged to a gun club that the Methodist church had in their cellar, in their basement. [laughter] ... When we went back [in the] summers to the farm, to the country, we'd put ... empty tomato soup cans on a fence post and shoot [them] with a rifle.

SI: Wow.

JR: [laughter] My brothers couldn't get over how well I could shoot, but I was much older then. I was a teenager. Then, we're great on roller skating and my older brother, he took me a lot and, well, the four of us would go roller skating in Paramus, [New Jersey], and that was more or less of our home roller rink. ... I would learn the dance steps, and then, I'd teach them to my brothers and we had a nice time. My brothers were so good to me, really, a kid sister. ... All three of them, they were so good to me, but, anyway, ... you know anything else Jane?

JER: You used to go skiing a lot.

JR: Oh, skiing, yes. Well, that's when my brother Bert got a job up in Bennington, Vermont, [working for] Carbon--darn it, that second name doesn't come to me--Carbon Carbide, yes, Carbon Carbide, yes, [Union Carbide & Carbon Corporation?]. He worked for that company and we'd go up there skiing in Vermont a lot. ...

JER: Was that part of a club? Did you have a skiing club?

JR: No, no, I'm trying to think. I can't remember the ski slopes we used to go on, was one outside of Manchester, Vermont. Stowe, I never got up there. [laughter] My brother Don came home from the service and, oh, he was used to skiing in the Alps. I saw him ... laying on the snow more than he was skiing. [laughter] He was always falling down, but he kidded us. He said, oh, he was used to skiing.

JER: Were there any other clubs that you were involved in?

JR: Turn the thing [off].

[TAPE PAUSED]

JR: I don't know. I belonged to that rifle club in the Methodist church. [laughter] Oh, what else did I belong to? I don't know, can't remember now. My mind is old and warped. It doesn't think well at times. [laughter]

SI: Would you go to New York or Newark for entertainment?

JR: Oh, all the time, yes, yes. ...

SI: What would you do when you would go into the cities?

JR: Well, go to operettas and shows and things like that, but, after we were married, my husband and I used to take the children into Radio City, ... you know, for Easter and Thanksgiving, or not Thanksgiving, but Christmas. ... Yes, do you remember Jane?

JER: Yes.

JR: Yes.

SI: When you were in high school, were you allowed to go into the cities alone or with friends?

JR: My mother wouldn't allow me to go to Newark, which was about eight miles away, until I was ... sixteen years old. [laughter] Can you imagine that? The kids today, they're free to do anything, [laughter] and much younger, but I'd have to take a trolley or a bus into Newark. ... I know, the first day I went, I was scared to death to go alone, because I was afraid I'd get lost, [laughter] but I made out okay, yes.

SI: As the 1930s were progressing and you were getting into high school, were you aware of what was going on in the world, with Hitler taking over in Germany?

JR: Oh, yes, certainly, yes, yes. It was scary.

SI: Was it discussed in your home often?

JR: Yes, at the dinner table. Why, that was brought up all the time. Of course, they didn't have television then. They had the radio and that was it. We used to listen to Walter Damrosch and his orchestra on the radio. [Editor's Note: Conductor and composer Walter Damrosch produced NBC's *Music Appreciation Hour*, a schoolchildren's radio show, from 1928 to 1942.] I think that was on a Friday. ... Oh, that was another thing. In Miss Mulford's class, this Walter Damrosch, he put out a booklet that would be for each week that he would be on the ... radio and we would follow this booklet and it'd have a picture of composers, I guess it was, that we'd put in the booklet. Each student in ... her class had a booklet, that we would follow Walter Damrosch and his radio programs. I don't know; what else would I think about?

SI: At that time, did you think that America would eventually get into the war?

JR: Oh, yes. I know, we went up to Canada. My brother Bert was driving then and it was during the summer. In fact, I guess it was just before our Labor Day and, that weekend, we went to Canada, because of my grandmother [once] living [there], born there. ... On the way home--now, there were running boards on the cars at that time--well, these young fellows would get on the ... running board and try to get my brothers to enter the Canadian Army. What do you call them? ...

SI: Recruiters?

JR: Recruiters, yes, recruiters. They were recruiters and my three brothers, they wanted them to join. This was in 1939 and I guess Canada was in the war at that time, with England, and so, Mother was scared to death, but they didn't want to do that. They weren't ready to go to war, because ... our country wasn't in a war. "Why should we go in a war?" So, anyway, then, my brother Don was in the Army. He--what do you call it?

SI: Drafted?

JR: Inducted? Yes, he was drafted. That's what I'm trying to think [of] and I can't think of it. ... He was drafted in 1941, I think it was August, but, anyway, I know it's here somewhere in the articles.

SI: It was before Pearl Harbor.

JR: Yes. Well, he went in for a year. He was drafted for a year. Well, of course, when Pearl Harbor came, why, they were in indefinitely. ... After 1941, my youngest brother Malcolm went in and he was drafted and, eventually, he got to Saipan and Don, I guess--did I mention that he went to Fort Dix? ...

SI: I do not think that you said it on the record.

JR: Yes. From Fort Dix, he went to Camp Croft, in Spartanburg, South Carolina, and he got his training there, and then, from there, he was sent to Fort Benning, Georgia. ... He was there, oh, I guess, maybe three years in Benning, in Fort Benning, and he was an instructor down there. ... He only got up to staff sergeant, but I think, after he was over in Europe, he became a staff

sergeant, but, anyway, he saw a lot of activity over in Europe, but not like my husband. ... He went over in--he landed in Africa, Or--what is it?

SI: Oran?

JR: Oran, yes, in Africa. Then, he went to Bizerte and (Gafsa?) and Sicily and Italy and Germany, and then, he went to France and I don't know. He finally came home from Versailles in France; Marseilles, Marseilles, yes. ...

SI: Yes, Marseilles, in the south of France.

JR: Yes. While he was over there, in Italy, he came down with jaundice and he was in the hospital, I don't know how long; three months, three months, I think. It's all in this. ...

SI: In the record you gave us.

JR: Yes. You have a copy, don't you?

SI: Yes, I have a copy here. We will talk more about his experiences a little later. You graduated from high school in 1943.

JR: Yes.

SI: You entered in 1939, just as the war was starting in Europe.

JR: Entered what?

SI: Entered high school, in 1939.

JR: Yes, yes, oh, and another thing, when I graduated from grammar school, they had a sewing class for girls and the girls had to make their own gowns for graduation. ... The material was an organdy material [sheer cotton cloth], white, and it had a round collar and puffed sleeves and the dresses were, like, ankle length. ... We were all the same pattern, but some of the organdies were different. ... They were all white, but they weren't all the same pattern, but, anyway, I thought that was interesting, because they don't do that today. [laughter]

SI: No.

JR: Yes, and then, when I graduated from high school, why, they had an honor guard, with the American flag, and the honor guard consisted of a fellow from each service, like the Army, Navy and Marines. ... My youngest brother Malcolm, he was home on furlough and they asked him to ... represent the Army. So, he was able to march in the honor guard. That ... made me feel proud, because it was my brother, but, anyway, ... some things come back to me that I haven't thought of in years and years. [laughter]

SI: As they come to mind, just go ahead and share your stories.

JR: Yes.

RM: Do you remember where you were when you found out about Pearl Harbor?

JR: Yes, yes. I was at the country home and my brother Bert always had a radio on. He was interested in what was on the radio and the news was that President Roosevelt came on and said that Pearl Harbor had been struck, and so forth, and we were in the war. Yes, you can hear that. Once in a while, they'll come on with what Roosevelt had to say at that time, but it was a shock. It was a shock. I take a quick breath after thinking about it. It was awful, but we were at the country house when it happened. We were there for sleigh riding and things like that in the snow. Yes, that's the way it is.

SI: Before that, some people did "Bundles for Britain" and other activities. Were you involved in any support efforts?

JR: Oh, yes, the Girl Reserves. We did that in high school, yes.

SI: It was called the Girl Reserves.

JR: Yes, called Girl Reserves. [Editor's Note: The Girl Reserves was a program started by the Young Women's Christian Association in World War I and continued into the post World War II period, when it became the Y-Teens group.]

SI: What would they do?

JR: Well, we'd bake things for the servicemen that were out of the country, and even in the country, but mostly out of the country, baking and things like that, and knitting things, yes, yes.

SI: Did that start after America got into the war or before?

JR: No, it was after, yes. I belonged to a glee club in high school. I don't know, can't remember everything. You have to ask me more questions. [laughter]

SI: Were there other clubs or things that you belonged to in high school?

JR: Can't think.

SI: You spent two years in high school before the war and two years after the war began [for the United States]. How did the war affect the high school?

JR: Well, in the sophomore year, lots of fellows joined the service, mostly the Navy. I don't know.

SI: Kearny was a big Navy town.

JR: Bayonne was ... more Navy. In fact, I guess it's still there today, isn't it? I don't know, in Bayonne, the naval [base]. [Editor's Note: The US Armed Forces' Military Ocean Terminal at Bayonne operated from 1942 to 1999.]

SI: Was there a lot of shipbuilding in the area?

JR: I'm sure there was, but, right now, I can't think of a company.

SI: In general, do you remember a lot of industrial growth when the war started?

JR: Well, where we lived was a residential area, but, as I say, South Kearny was more industry. You have any suggestions, Jane?

JER: Didn't you collect tires or something?

JR: I can't hear you.

JER: Didn't somebody collect tires in the family for the war effort? no.

JR: That's new to me. [laughter] I don't know.

SI: Were there any scrap drives?

JR: I can remember, [going under] the Clay Street Bridge that went from Kearny to Newark, there were big barges, I guess you'd call it, heaped with old cars and all kinds of metal. ... This is before the war--that was all going to Japan. Well, that stopped, I'll tell you, when Pearl Harbor was struck, but I can see it yet, alongside of the bridge, in the water, were these heaps of metal and it all was being shipped to Japan. Can you imagine that? and then, they hit us in Pearl Harbor. Well, I could see where the atomic bomb might have been good, [laughter] but I thought [it] was sad.

SI: Were there other ways that the war changed your neighborhood, like Civil Defense drills?

JR: No, out in the country, it was that way. They had different points where the people would go out and watch for airplanes at night, and so forth, yes. I know my brother-in-law, Roy Rinehart, he did that during the war and they had quite a few posts around in the country, but I don't remember anything in the city.

SI: Would you have to blackout your house?

JR: No.

SI: Like putting up curtains?

JR: No. Well, we always put the shades down anyway. [laughter] ... That was a normal thing, but, no, I don't remember all that.

SI: Did you have to cut back on things as the war and the rationing program continued?

JR: Oh, my, yes, yes. Mother had coupon books, for butter and different foods. I can't remember what else. Gasoline was rationed. What else? got to stop and think. Do you have any ideas of what you've heard? I don't know.

SI: I know sugar was.

JR: Oh, yes, sugar, yes, and butter. I don't know why butter, but sugar especially. ... My dad was a great eater of sugar. [laughter] So, I think you could only get a five-pound bag for [a coupon] and it had to last you quite awhile. Yes, yes, it used to be nice with the cereal. Some cereals would have a plate or a cup, or something like that, or a saucer, and you could almost make a set of dishes from what cereal you bought. That was great and, now, they don't have that.

SI: I know they used to give dishes away at movie theaters, too.

JR: Oh, yes, definitely, yes.

SI: You graduated in 1943 and you were motivated to get into industry to help the war effort.

JR: That's right.

SI: How did the specific opportunity to work at DuPont come about?

JR: Well, my brother didn't want me to go to DuPont's for work. He wanted me to go to college and he wouldn't take me down to have an interview or anything, but my next-door neighbor, or our next-door neighbor, Lynn Harvey, he said, "Well, you want to go down to DuPont's and work in the lab, why, you can go. I'll take you." So, he took me down for an interview and they hired me right away and I had to have a physical and I had my fingerprints taken. I'm still wondering if they're on record somewhere, [laughter] but, anyway, yes, I had to ... be fingerprinted, and then, I started my job, almost [immediately], after all that was taken care of. I started at least before two weeks, anyway, went by and I don't remember much of anything else, but I was interviewed by several people and, I don't know, I guess they knew my brother, you know--maybe that's why I got the job right away. He told me I was hired as soon as I got my physical and prints, my fingerprints, taken.

SI: Do you know--I am sorry.

JR: ... I was going to say, one department in DuPont's was a shoe company it had and I started in that first, making, oh, shoes, what did they call them? safety shoes, and it was the points of the shoe. ... I don't know, it was something points--it had nothing to do with metal, but it had to do with, ... like, a cloth composition that we would have to make. I didn't make it. It was out in the plant and I would go out and get samples, and then, test them and, at that time, then, they had to figure different things out, and we always used a slide rule. We didn't have computers or anything in those days, [laughter] or not computers, but calculators, and they didn't have those,

but we always used a slide rule. ... I only worked there for a short time, and then, I went into the research department. Yes, I know, right outside our windows in the research department, they had a huge pool. I guess ... it was for safety, water, in case they needed water for a fire or something, and they had these goldfishes in it and, gosh, what is it, carp? ... Is that what they called them? They were huge. They had about six of them out there. [laughter]

RM: Did you work with many other women at DuPont? Did they hire a lot of women?

JR: Oh, yes. Oh, see, a lot of men were in the service. Yes, I worked for six chemical engineers that had their PhDs, and then, there was the other buildings, the other [engineers] that had their doctorates, also, ... but they were the head of the department ... in these other buildings. ... I would get samples from the different buildings, and then, I would test them in the lab and I know, this one day, they wouldn't let me go down into this one building. ... Come to find out, three fellows had been killed during the night, on a night shift. I don't know what happened. Something blew up and they were killed, and they wouldn't [let us in]. I didn't go down to that department for some time, until they rebuilt the thing, but that was sad. One was a PhD and all, so terrible. ...

SI: You explained your motivation for doing this, but, among your friends and other women your age, were they also motivated to do war work?

JR: Oh, yes, yes. None of them went to college. They all got jobs, yes.

SI: Did anybody go into the service?

JR: No, not that I knew of, in the area. My brother had [a classmate]. When he graduated from Newark College in engineering, ... there was one girl out of the whole class that graduated and she became a WAVE [Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service, US Navy] and I think she was stationed up in Massachusetts. I think it was Boston, but she never went out of the country, but she had her bachelor's degree, and then, she went on and got her master's degree. In fact, she had several master's degrees. Her name was Mildred Preen. She could pilot a plane and she had her pilot's license. She worked for her father, who was in construction, and they had a steam shovel that she would run. That woman could do most anything, but she lived out in the country, where we did, too, and we were quite friendly, and her sister and I were very close. Her sister was older than she was, but we were very close, Emily. She married a man by the name of Henry (Barlow?), but, anyway, I don't know.

SI: For women, how was serving in the military viewed? Was it seen as something good or not good to do?

JR: Oh, yes, everything was trying to do their best to help out in the war, get it over with, but most of the women [in] my day were in banks or insurance companies, and then, when they got married, they weren't able to work, but, after, during the war, that changed.

SI: When you went to work at DuPont, was it a job that, previously, a woman would not normally be working at?

JR: Yes. Well, I don't know about that. It's more men with degrees, that had a college education, yes. That's when the women wearing slacks came in. They wore, oh, gosh, what do you call them? overalls, like, and, in some labs now, I did that when I first started at DuPont's, but, when I went to the research lab, we didn't do that. We wore white coats, yes.

SI: Was there any resistance to large numbers of women coming in to work there?

JR: They were happy to get anybody to come in ... in those days, because there were so many fellows that were in the service. ... As I said, when I was a sophomore in high school, at that time, they were taking fellows from the sophomore class into the service and that was before graduation, after, well, '41, '42, yes, about '42, '41, yes, because I remember one fellow, he went in the service and he was killed. Awful thing, war--I just wish it was over with now. I don't see where we're doing any--I think we've helped a lot in educating children over there, ... giving them the opportunity to learn more, especially women, ... but they'll always be fighting between themselves over there in Europe or Africa. Yes, I don't see where, it'll change.

SI: When you were working at DuPont, how were you able to keep up with the news of the war? How important was that to you?

JR: Well, I have two brothers, one in the Pacific and one in the European Theater--why, you're concerned about it, yes, newspapers, and so forth, yes, and radio, yes. My poor mother was heartbroken to have her two boys in the service, but there was one woman in the area, she had five sons in the service. Can you imagine, five? I don't know whether they all lived or not. I don't know, forgotten.

SI: After the war started, were you still able to go out to the country or did you have to curtail that because of gas rationing?

JR: No, my father, he would take a bus to work or whatever and save the gasoline to go to the country, for his garden, yes.

SI: When the Victory garden program started, did they also start a garden in Arlington?

JR: Oh, yes. Everybody had little plots, yes, had to watch for the rabbits, but there ... wasn't many wildlife in the city. I think it's gotten much worse now. [laughter] Yes, I miss my garden. My husband had a wonderful garden, too. He had about an acre of everything, potatoes. He'd give things away. ...

SI: Once you got into the research department, tell us what a typical day was like in that job.

JR: Well, the first thing you would do is go in and see what your job was for the day and mine was--the first thing I would do is go to a different building and get samples to test. ... I would test for breakage of the plastic that I was using or--I don't know, I can't remember, to tell you the truth. We kept busy, anyway, and, at lunchtime, the women would play bridge and they were so serious. I didn't care for bridge. I mean, I learned to play. I wouldn't know how to play bridge

now, but, anyway, that was at lunchtime. ... Then, I played for a while, and then, I said, "Well, I'll be a substitute. ... You can get somebody else to [play]." There were other women that were interested, always looking over your shoulder, watching, and so forth. So, I said, well, I'd give it up, because I couldn't see it. I would go home for lunch, anyway. So, that was what the women would do during [the] lunch hour, and then, of course, we'd have to figure out what we had experimented with or whatever, and use our slide rule to figure this and that out. I sort of forget now, to tell you the truth, but we kept busy. ... In research, it was sort of a social thing, too. We always had parties to go to, like the one I showed the picture of, and I don't know.

SI: The group in that picture, is that typical of the size of the department?

JR: Well, this was just in the one department that we were in, yes. It was more or less like a family, yes.

SI: There were about twenty people in the department.

JR: Well, I worked for six that were PhDs and they were all married men. I'll never forget, one fellow had graduated from Cornell and he was really something. He thought he was something and he was going to tell everybody how to do this, that and the other thing. Well, they put him on night shift. Boy, that cooled him down real fast. [laughter] He was beat. He didn't tell anybody anything anymore, and he was just out of college. ... He had to learn, too, the way things were done, but that was a joke and that was funny, to see him. He really changed, I'll tell you, in about a month or two. That was it, but he was going to set the world on fire there for a while. [laughter]

SI: Were you always on the same shift?

JR: I worked during the day, yes, but they had a night shift also. ... I don't ever remember a woman working on a night shift. It was more men out in the factory part of it. I don't know.

RM: Could you talk to anyone outside of your job about the work you were doing?

JR: Heavens no; hardly knew what we were doing ourselves, only testing this, that and the other thing. ... Actually, it was really one thing. Yes, I don't know.

RM: What were you testing?

JR: Well, it was plastic. Actually, it was Teflon, but we didn't know it. It was called heva at that time and they were looking for someone to come up with a name for this product that we had made. ... I don't know, I've read articles that some other company came up with it before we worked on this Teflon. I always was under the impression that DuPont, was the first one to work on it and make it, but I've read these articles that I've got now and it doesn't seem that way. So, maybe every company that worked on it took the credit for it. [laughter] I don't know. [Editor's Note: Roy Plunkett discovered polytetrafluoroethylene in 1938 while working in DuPont's Jackson Laboratory in Deepwater, New Jersey. The product was used on many parts involved in the Manhattan Project, which produced the atomic bomb during World War II, because it was

impervious to the corrosive effects of the gases released during the production of U-235. The name Teflon was registered in 1945.]

SI: Maybe.

JR: Yes, I don't know, and then, I was with the company six years and they were moving that department into Wilmington, Delaware, their main facility. ... I was asked to go and I had just gotten married and was no sense of me going, really. I wanted to be--my husband was still working for American Airlines and I wanted to stay in the area. So, I didn't go, but most of the men went, with their PhDs. They did go, but there are some that didn't either.

SI: You say you worked for six PhDs. How many women your age were working there, in the department?

JR: ... I would think that there were maybe four my age, and then, several others were maybe eight or nine years older than I was. Yes, there weren't many older women in our department, really. One time, in a research lab, I worked in the dark room, developed pictures, and don't ask me what they were now. I can't remember. Yes, I can remember doing that, but I don't know what it was, can't remember. Isn't that funny; any ideas, Jane?

JER: No, I don't recall that, but ... you said there was a terrible explosion one night.

JR: Yes, I told that, where the three fellows were killed, yes. It was sad.

SI: You lived at home the whole time you worked for DuPont.

JR: Yes, yes. I could ... walk to the company, yes, about maybe a half a mile or so from my home, yes. It's all torn down now, the company, and there's a lot of condos in there, ... Portuguese. I didn't know there was even a settlement of Portuguese there, but they seem to be in these condos, yes.

SI: Did you have any other jobs, besides collecting this material and testing it?

JR: No. I worked pretty much on the same thing; trying to think. I know they had--I can't remember [if] it would've been research or whether it was in this other company that I worked for at DuPont's, huge. Oh, what do I want to say? We used to test things in this one thing and it had a vent to it. What do you call it? ... I can't think.

SI: A kiln?

JR: No.

SI: Autoclave?

JR: Well, ... they had a ventilator in this thing that would take the fumes out from the chemicals, so that you wouldn't be breathing them, because it could be injurious. What the dickens did they call them? Oh, I don't know. Right now, I guess I'm getting tired.

SI: Some kind of filter?

JR: It was a big thing, like a big; well, I don't know. Isn't that something? The word won't come to me, what it was called. I've got to stop. Maybe it'll come to me later; go to something else.

SI: You worked on that.

JR: Well, we would test things in it. ... It's like a three-sided oven and with a vent in the top of it that took the fumes out, so [that] we wouldn't breathe them as we did a test in it, but that was that shoe company that was part of DuPont's. ... I wasn't in that long, but I did a lot of stress tests on the plastic that we were working on and what it was was Teflon, but it wasn't called Teflon at that time, not with us.

SI: When did you first find out that it was Teflon that you were working on?

JR: That's a good question. I wouldn't know. I've forgotten. I don't know. I thought it was after I left the company, but I don't know. See, we ... didn't know what we were working on. It was just plastic and it was something that could withstand excessive heat and what I have heard since, that it was, like, washers made of Teflon in the atomic bomb and that's what they were made of, Teflon, and I guess other parts of the atomic bomb also had Teflon in it. Maybe it was lined with it, because it could withstand so much heat. ... I don't know. See, we didn't know what we were even testing. It was just a hunk of plastic each day, a sample, yes, never knew. [laughter] ... I often wonder whether the chemical engineers that I worked for, whether they even--I don't think they knew, either. I'd like to know who knew what was for the atomic bomb. I wouldn't know, yes.

SI: Working in that kind of environment, where you do not know what you are working on one hundred percent, were there a lot of rumors or speculation?

JR: No. What you did, you went in every day and did the same thing, day after day, and that was it. You knew you were testing something and just ... trying to find out the stress test, how it came out and you figured it on the slide rule what was what and that was it. You reported that every day. ... No, we never knew, never knew.

SI: How soon after you started working there did they send you to take these classes?

JR: When I got into the research department, yes.

SI: What was the first class that you took?

JR: The first one I went to? It was Rutgers. Well, I think I took two of them at the same time, Rutgers and Princeton, yes. I think Dr. Alyea I don't think he ever looked at a test paper or anything. [laughter] He just passed everybody. He was funny. As I say, he was what they made the *Absent-Minded Professor* movie after.

SI: He was a professor at Princeton, Hubert Alyea, A-L-Y-E-A. [Editor's Note: Dr. Hubert Alyea served as a faculty member in Princeton University's Chemistry Department from 1930 to 1972. Walt Disney based the lead character in the 1961 film *The Absent-Minded Professor* on Dr. Alyea.]

JR: Yes, he was a professor at Princeton University.

SI: What subject did he teach?

JR: I don't know. It's there, in one of the things I have here, wherever it is. ... He signed one of them. What's this? This isn't one. Here it is, here. This is his signature here and this is what I took from him.

SI: You took "Introductory Inorganic Chemistry" with Professor Alyea.

JR: Yes.

SI: It was granted on June 21, 1944. It was called the Engineering, Science and Management War Training Program. Even though one was offered by Princeton and one was offered by Rutgers, you went to the same site in Newark.

JR: Yes, it was at Newark Boys. What did I tell you? Newark Boys Academy, on First Street in Newark, yes, used to drive my father's great, big Packard. That was so hard to steer. Oh, it was tight, not like today's cars. [laughter]

SI: What did you think of the classes? Were they challenging or had your high school education prepared you enough to take them?

JR: Oh, yes. In fact, I did a lot of reading of my brother's chemical books and I think I was a little ahead of some students, yes.

SI: How big were the classes?

JR: Not very big. ... I would say maybe eight at the most, yes.

SI: How often would you meet?

JR: Once a week, yes.

SI: This was after work.

JR: Oh, yes, at night, and I think it gives the hours. ...

SI: The two Princeton courses were sixty hours. The second class you took was called "Introductory Chemical Calculations" with Earle Caley and you graduated on June 20, 1945.

JR: Yes.

RM: Was it mostly women or men in the classes?

JR: ... Oh, men.

RM: Men.

JR: Men, yes. In fact, I was about the only girl there one time, yes. ... Then, Rutgers ...

SI: The Rutgers one said it was twenty-four class hours. It was called "Basic Plastics" and the person who signed it was (M.A. Chaffee?). The date is May 16, 1944.

JR: ... I took another course from him, too, and I can't find that certificate no how. I can't remember what it was, what I took it on. I've had a lot in my life since that time. I can't remember things sometimes. [laughter]

SI: Did you find that these were helpful in your job?

JR: Yes, in a way, yes. Oh, I don't know, life goes on.

SI: What did you think of the professors? You mentioned Alyea.

JR: Well, Alyea, he was so funny, but the others [professors] were very down to Earth and all business, teaching. They wanted you to learn, [laughter] but he was an absent-minded professor-oh, golly, couldn't help but like him. [laughter]

SI: Another thing you showed us was the Army-Navy Efficiency Award.

JR: Yes. Well, we got that before the war was over, right, '43.

SI: Yes, the date on here is October 26, 1943.

JR: Yes.

SI: That was pretty soon after you arrived at the plant.

JR: Yes.

SI: Was there a ceremony?

JR: Oh, yes. As a matter-of-fact, I think that's the program there. ... The government must have known that we were working on the atomic bomb part, but we did not know. Nobody in the company knew. They didn't dare tell it, really.

RM: How soon after the war did you know you had worked on the atomic bomb?

JR: I have no idea. I don't know. Maybe a year later, I don't know. Well, it was the Manhattan Project. So, what's the date of that one there? You have it? ...

SI: Yes, it is somewhere here in this pile. [Editor's Note: The interview participants spend some time searching for the document.] The date on this says August 6, 1945.

JR: That's the Manhattan Project, the certificate for it, yes. What's the date?

SI: It says August 6, 1945, but that was the day the first bomb was dropped. [Editor's Note: Hiroshima was the target of the first atomic raid on August 6, 1945. Nagasaki was attacked on August 9, 1945. V-J Day was declared on August 14, 1945, in the United States and August 15, 1945, in the Pacific.]

JR: Yes.

SI: That does not really jive.

JR: Well, of course, it was after the war was over. So, no, the Manhattan Project, that didn't mean anything to us, either. [laughter].

SI: Do you remember where you were and what your reaction was the day you first learned about the bombing of Hiroshima?

JR: About the bomb, you mean?

SI: Yes, when it was dropped on Hiroshima.

JR: Oh, I don't know, always had the radio on to hear about our boys, [laughter] my brothers in the service, and you're supposed to--so much action there in the European Theater. I don't know, yes, I don't remember, yes.

SI: Were you able to maintain good correspondence with your brothers who were overseas?

JR: All the time. My mother, I think she wrote at least three or four times ... a week. She was always writing letters, to my two brothers, yes.

SI: Did you write them letters often or was it mostly through your mother?

JR: I didn't have to, but I did write them, yes, and they'd tell how they received my letter and how happy they were, and so forth. ... Yes, they both had cars and they wanted me to drive

them. ... I was thinking about buying a Ford and my one brother said, much later, he was glad I changed my mind, because, after all, I'd had their cars at home that I should use, and so, that was that. I did run their cars. My one brother Don, he had a 19--gee, what was that?--'37 Packard. It was green. He used to call it *The Green Hornet*. So, he'd write about *The Green Hornet*, how I was making out with *The Green Hornet*. [laughter]

SI: I saw, in some of the pictures, *The Green Hornet* and *The Green Hornet II*.

JR: Yes.

SI: Do you remember the day the war ended in Europe, if that stands out in your memory at all?

JR: Not the date, but I know it was something. I know, for the summer, we would come to the country. So, I would go to work. From Gladstone, New Jersey, I'd take the train into Newark, and then, from Newark, I'd take a bus to Kearny, or Arlington, at that time. I don't know whether they changed it to Kearny, but the whole area. We were let out early from work. So, I got on the train and almost all companies were closing at that time. So, I'd take the bus from Kearny to Newark and the Clark Thread mills was on the way and everybody was let out of there, too, and the bus was loaded, but I was able to get on the bus where it first started. So, I was able to have a seat and other people were ... hanging on the--what do you call it?--the straps, and the bus was loaded. So, finally, [I] got to the railroad station, just across the river, and we took the train to Gladstone, because they were running more trains to get the people out of the city, where they were going, get them home. So, as I was going to Pottersville, New Jersey, to come to the Oldwick area, where I was living, had the summer home, my parents had the summer home, why, coming through Pottersville, there was a woman out there. Her name was Dot Mettler, actually, Dot Wortman Mettler, and they had a big, round iron wheel, like a frame, came off a train, I think. Do you know what I'm talking about?

SI: Like the wheels on the train.

JR: Well, it was just a rim and she was out there pounding it like the dickens as we went by. To let us know, she would shout, "The war is over." [laughter] Everybody was so happy that the war was over and that their family, the boys, would be home. ... Then, as I say, we would watch the newspaper [for] when these ... different ships were coming in with the different groups and we watched that. ... As I say, my brother Don, when he was coming in on Christmas Day, coming home, that was really something. We waited all day. Four o'clock in the afternoon, we saw him coming up the street from the railroad station and he was about two blocks away. We were so happy, we ran down to meet him. We saw this soldier coming, we knew it must be him, [laughter] but it was a joy to see him, to think that he got home safe, without any shrapnel or anything like that inside his body. I'll tell you, I donate to the veterans that ... have been wounded. What do they call them, the paraplegics?

SI: Paralyzed Veterans of America?

JR: Yes. Well, it isn't that name, but it's the paraplegics and I donate to them. I feel it's so important for people to help them out. It's all we can do is send money. You can't do much for

them. They're in the hospitals and, gee, one fellow that I saw on television, he had an arm off and two legs. Can you imagine that? and he had a smile. They make do with what they got; terrible.

SI: During the war, when somebody would lose a family member, would there be a ceremony or would people help them out in some way?

JR: Oh, neighbors would come in droves to say hello at home, your home, but other than that way, why, they didn't have any ceremony.

SI: When somebody was killed-in-action or wounded.

JR: If they were killed-in-action, they were killed-in-action--that was all. It was sadness, but there was nothing, no ceremony whatsoever, not like they have today. At churches, yes, they had ceremonies, but not much, like they have today. You just felt the sadness in your heart for the family and it was [tough]. There was so much of it, to tell you the truth. That was sad, a sad, sad time.

RM: Do you remember what people thought of Japanese-Americans?

JR: There was one girl that was in my high school class. Well, she was in grammar school with me, too, but, anyway, she was Japanese and her family could not go out of the town of Arlington. They couldn't even go to Newark, which is about eight miles away. They couldn't. They had to stay in Arlington, and an awful nice family. Their name was Yamaguchi and, to this day, I correspond with her at Christmastime, but I think she was [part of] a family of six children and I think she's the only one left now. It's sad, for her, but a lovely family, but they weren't allowed to go out of town, yes.

SI: Would people say things to them when they went out?

JR: I wouldn't know, no. In school, why, she was just another student, like us, and they were citizens, but they weren't allowed to go out of town.

SI: The government would not let them leave.

JR: [Yes]. I don't know if it was the government or the town. ... I think it was nationwide that they were confined to where they lived, yes.

SI: In school, would students bother her?

JR: No, we never had that problem, no. ... Her brother, I know, was very athletic in school, the two of them. I don't know how many brothers she had, but, anyway, I think it was mostly girls in the family. I didn't know much about Taka, only that, we were friends in school and it was a lovely family. That's all I know. ... I know that all her siblings were active in school activities, yes. They wanted to be a part of America. They were Americans and they wanted to be a part of America.

JER: Does she still live in New Jersey?

JR: She lives in Kearny, yes, 72 Oakwood Avenue, yes. [laughter].

SI: Since you were working in an industry with men and women working together, were there any negative views towards men who were not in the service?

JR: No.

SI: Did they face any prejudice from people outside the plant?

JR: I don't know of any prejudice whatsoever, no.

SI: 4-F-ers being looked down on?

JR: No, none of that then. Everyone tried to work together and just wanted the war over with and their families back to normal, yes. [laughter]

SI: You continued working at DuPont for a few years after the war ended. Did the work at the plant change at all or were you doing the same thing?

JR: We were testing different materials. That's all I can tell you. As far as I know, no one knew what we were really working on during the war, but, then, I know they were testing plastics that had been colored, that from a white, they would color. It was for paint and they would send the samples, the strips of plastic, down to Florida on a board and they'd have it out in the weather, to see how the weather affected ... the color of the plastic. ... We would test those after, like, six months or a year or two years, whatever, yes. I know that was, I guess, after the war, can't remember. I'm sure it was. [laughter]

SI: Did they have to cut down the workforce at all?

JR: Well, they hired them. They would take back former employees that had been in the service. They would take them back. They found them jobs, not like today. This is in bad shape today.

SI: Did you see a change in the composition of the workforce? Did you see more men or women coming back?

JR: Oh, yes, more men, yes. See, the women didn't participate too much, in our area, in the service. The ones that did were just out of high school, actually, but I don't know.

SI: Did any women leaving their jobs become resentful about leaving the workforce?

JR: Well, when the fellows came back from the service, they got married, and then, the women, if they were working, they would leave to be a housewife then. [laughter] ... As I say, many that

worked for insurance companies or banks, they weren't allowed to work after they got married, but, then, that changed, too.

SI: The company would not let them work if they were married.

JR: No, especially banks and insurance companies, but I guess that must have changed during the war, because they needed women, to fill in for the men. ... I can't remember. [laughter]

SI: You are remembering a lot. Is there anything else from your work at DuPont that we should add to the record?

JR: I can't think.

SI: You said it was very social, that there was a rich social side to the job.

JR: Well, where I worked, in the lab, research, yes, they'd have parties for every occasion, especially at Christmastime. We always had a party. It was called a cocktail party, [laughter] but I don't know. There wasn't much drinking, where people would get drunk or anything like that. No, it was more dignified.

SI: Was there any dating among the workforce, or marriages?

JR: Not that I know of. I never knew of any, yes. I've got to stop and think. Oh, my brother had a girlfriend there and he would take her out to lunch every day--no, take her home for lunch, that was it--to her home and he'd go home to his, our home. ... That didn't last and one of the girls that I worked with in this shoe company, they had a big window there and we'd stand there and look out and I'd see my brother drop her off, to come back to work after lunch. ... The girl that used to be in the lab with me, she married my brother, eventually. [laughter] ... She became a nurse during the war. The government ... had a certain program, I can't remember what it was now, for women becoming nurses. So, Dot went to a Presbyterian hospital in Newark. That's where she got her training and, after the war, actually, after my husband and I got married, they got married, but it's strange, here we are, watching my brother drop this other girl, woman, off, and then, Dot married him anyway. [laughter] I don't know how that worked, but, of course, ... we worked together, we were friends. She lived in Montclair. ...

SI: During the war, what would you do when you were off from work for entertainment?

JR: Well, we always went to the country on weekends and holidays, and so forth, and the summers we'd spend in the country. Yes, that was called Fairmount-Tewksbury Township, but, then, when I got married, our farm was in Oldwick, outside of Oldwick, and our address was Oldwick. ...

SI: You told us how you met and married your husband. Tell us about setting up your family, those early years.

JR: Well, two years after we were married, my older daughter, Jean, she was supposed to be a John, Jr., but she turned out to be a Jean, Jr. [laughter] ... She wasn't a son, she was a daughter. Well, anyway, the doctor told us wrong and she was born in 1950, and then, five years later, Jane was born. We only had the two girls. Well, that's that. Very active--my husband was on the school board and he had to give that up because he was elected to be on the township committee and he couldn't be on both of them at the same time. So, he was mayor. Every year, they would change. I think there were three on the committee, ... the township committee, and they would change every year. You'd be mayor one year, and then, the next year, you'd be police commissioner and, oh, road commissioner the following year, then, whatever. So, he was the mayor three times, and then, I was involved ... as a Sunday school teacher and, oh, gosh, so many things. I was a Girl Scout leader, and then, I was appointed to ... Rolling Hills Girl Scout Council and I don't know when I was appointed; I was appointed something special.

SI: Within the Girl Scouts?

JR: Yes, it was some council. What the dickens? I don't know whether I have it or not.

SI: You only wrote down Girl Scout leader here.

JR: Well, that's all I needed, but I was also appointed for a large area of Tewksbury Township and part of Clinton Township, but, anyway, gee, I can't remember what ... I was called at that time, and then, I was a 4-H leader and ...

JER: ... Your sewing.

JR: ... Yes, for sewing, and my daughters always got first prize, [laughter] because Mother always made sure that she did it right, but I think that was a good sewing group of young girls, and then, what else did I belong to? oh, political things.

JER: Freeholders, you worked with them.

JR: Yes. Oh, I ... was appointed shade commissioner, a member of the Shade Commission of Hunterdon County. I was appointed that for a while.

SI: What did that entail?

JR: ... Well, anything to do with trees or whatever, in the different areas throughout Hunterdon County, and then, ... this was by a Republican freeholder ... that appointed me, and then, when ... it changed, why, it was Democratic, then, I was out, because the Democratic freeholder had his idea who he wanted. So, I wasn't on the commission very long, but, oh, I can't remember all the things. ... I was on so many things. Of course, I was on the election board, and so forth. Oh, I don't know.

JER: Dad was a member of the Hunterdon County Board of Agriculture.

JR: Oh, yes, yes. He was honored in that. ... He had a Century Award for owning a house, or the farm, for over a hundred years. ... After my husband died, I really got deep into genealogy and working for the different historical societies that I did and, as I say, I did those church records. I don't know, been involved in the DAR for fifty-nine years so far. Next year'll be sixty. My mother and I both joined the DAR together, in Newark, the Nova Caesarea Chapter, and then, when Jean came along, why, I couldn't be running down to Newark all the time to the different meetings. Oh, I also belonged to the New England Women's Society [National Society of New England Women?]. Then, as I say, I couldn't go to these meetings in Newark. So, then, I joined the Whitehouse, Old White House Chapter [Old White House-General Frelinghuysen-Colonel Lowrey Chapter], in Whitehouse, New Jersey, and then, I moved up here and I joined the ... Colonel Maxwell Chapter [General William Maxwell Chapter]. So, that's where I belong now. It's out of Belvidere, but they meet up here in Mount Olive, in the church there.

SI: Would you just attend meetings or would you do other things with the DAR?

JR: Oh, I was a historian for a while in the old Whitehouse chapter and living at a farm, you've got lots of activity there, things that you have to attend to. So, I really never got involved in being a regent or anything like that. I didn't need it. I mean, I couldn't afford to do it. I didn't have the time, because it takes a lot of meetings you have to go to, state and national, and so forth. I went to two national annual meetings. They were very interesting, down in Washington, DC, and we just had their eightieth, the William Maxwell. ... What did I just tell you I belonged to?

SI: I think it was William Maxwell.

JR: Yes, I think so. [laughter] It came out and I didn't know whether I was saying it right or not. I'm getting hoarse. They had their eightieth anniversary and they gave me a certificate for being a member for fifty-nine years in the DAR, but I wanted to get to something else, and then, I don't know what the gist of it is.

SI: You and your husband had a dairy farm.

JR: Yes, had a dairy farm until 1972 and, from then on, he raised beefalo. You ever hear of beefalo [a cattle/bison hybrid]?

SI: Yes.

JR: Yes, and he was the first beefalo owner in New Jersey, but, I don't know, I've had a full life, an enjoyable life.

SI: With the farm, then, raising the cattle, what would you have to do as part of that operation?

JR: Well, our cow barn was across a little brook and my husband used to say, "Your job is on the side of the house, ... that side of the brook, and mine is out where the cow barn is," [laughter] but I got the kids to hunt eggs and things like that, and I was a busy woman with my other, outside activities, plus, being a wife and mother. ... My husband, he had such a large garden and

I'd do a lot of freezing of fruits and vegetables, mostly vegetables, and out of his garden. ... I can remember, he would bring peach baskets, oh, maybe so high, full of green beans and he'd put two of them on my counter and I'd have to take care of all those, freeze them, and so forth, and then, I'd no sooner get that countertop cleared, and so happy that it was through, and he'd bring in some more. [laughter] I used to get so sick and tired of green beans, oh, dear, but, anyway, they lasted the whole year. I tried to can peaches and things like that, fruit. My mother always tried to have a hundred cans of fruit and vegetables, in her day, but I didn't have that many, because we had so much food and our own beef, and so forth, that I didn't have to can so many. ... As I say, I did a lot of freezing in my time, of the vegetables and the fruit, the peaches and whatever, and it wasn't like standing over a hot stove all day long. ... You'd steam the vegetables and it wouldn't take much to do. You always used a pressure cooker. So, anyway, this is what I got at the eightieth anniversary of the DAR.

SI: Colonel Maxwell.

JR: Yes, William Maxwell. ...

SI: It was not long ago.

JR: No, it was just a couple weeks ago. They always have their meetings on Saturday, which is sort of convenient. My daughter, Jean, she was able to go to the meetings, too, sometimes. So, that was a table setting and I had a piece of ribbon underneath my coffee cup and that was for the table piece. Everybody got, if they had that piece of ribbon, why, they could take the table arrangement. So, this is what's left of it, the red, white and blue.

SI: You showed us a lot of information about your husband's war record. Did he talk about his time in the service much?

JR: Not too much; ... to a man, yes, but not to women. I know there was one man, he was German and he came from the city and he visited a friend up in the mountain above our farm. ... He was German, as I say, and he would stop in to buy eggs from us. So, my husband and he got talking and about how they were during the war. Why, his ship was gunned down, sank in the Mediterranean, and my husband said, "You're kidding." He said, "We sank a German ship. Our ship, did that, too, to the Germans," and he said, "I wonder if it could have been your ship that we torpedoed." [laughter] It could have been--maybe it was another one, I don't know--but my husband said that the ship, that they were going, I guess from Sicily, I don't know, ... I'm thinking, I'm not sure, that it could have been from Sicily to Italy or I don't know, but, anyway, my husband thought, after that, it could have been their ship that torpedoed this other fellow's ship, the German ship. I don't know, but the two of them were, real good friends, from him coming for eggs all the time, and then, to bring that subject up one time, I don't know.

SI: Were they friends after that?

JR: Oh, yes, sure, it was something to talk about. My husband wouldn't hold a grudge against anybody. [laughter] He liked everyone. They liked him.

RM: Looking back, do you feel proud that you worked on such a famous project, the Manhattan Project?

JR: Now, I'm not understanding what you're saying. ...

RM: Looking back now, do you feel proud of yourself that you worked on this project, of the work that you did?

JR: Well, that I did? You mean the Manhattan Project?

RM: Yes.

JR: In a way. I believe that it ended the war, thanks to Harry Truman. [laughter] Oh, golly, yes, I often wondered if Roosevelt had that in mind. They were building it, putting ... the atomic bomb together. He certainly must have had an idea that the way he would end the war--I don't know. I often wondered about that. During the war, there's a lot we didn't know, too. [laughter]

SI: From what you said earlier, it sounds like you have some mixed feelings about the atomic bomb.

JR: Well, I wouldn't talk about it, that I was, on that project. I wouldn't talk about it, because the thought of killing people isn't what I like [laughter] and there's so many, gee, but, then, again, it brought our veterans home, our soldiers and sailors, and so forth. Well, it's an awful thing what Japan did to us, in Pearl Harbor. Boy, have you ever been down there, to Pearl Harbor? They take you where the ships were, and you know that there's bodies in these ships that are down in the water--gives you an awful eerie feeling. My husband and I went to Hawaii and it's an awful strange feeling. It's just silence on the ship that we went on, ... a cruise boat, and they stopped at ... the *Arizona* and you knew that there were all these bodies still in there, in the water--gives me chills to even think about it.

SI: Is this a feeling that evolved over time or did you feel that way at the time?

JR: Right now, I got chills thinking about it, yes. It's an eerie feeling, to see what they did down there.

SI: I meant how you felt about the use of the bomb.

JR: Well, I guess it's tit for tat, as they say. They did that to us, we did this to them and I guess it's even. I'm always afraid they'll come back, though, and do something to us, but, now, we've got other countries to worry about.

SI: Is there anything else you would like to add for the record that we did not discuss?

JR: Not at the moment. [laughter] ... I think we've talked enough.

SI: We have the information on your husband's military record that we will copy.

JR: Yes.

SI: You mentioned that he was a pioneer with American Airlines. What did he do with the company?

JR: ... In that time, they only had, like, a two-rotor plane and I think he was responsible for the gasoline that went into each plane as it came in, then, went out.

JER: Maintenance.

JR: Yes, maintenance, yes.

SI: Did he work for the airline in this area or did he work somewhere else?

JR: I don't have anything on him? Did I give you that? He started out, he was in Boston and he was in, I don't know, Syracuse, I guess Syracuse.

SI: This just mentions that he was an American Airlines pioneer. It does not mention where he was.

JR: ... I'm sure it tells where he was.

JER: So, it was Boston, and then, Syracuse.

JR: Oh, I don't know. ...

JER: LaGuardia.

JR: LaGuardia, yes. ... I guess he started in LaGuardia.

SI: LaGuardia, Boston, Rochester and Newark.

JER: And then, he was transferred to their new station in Arizona, but he didn't want to go.

JR: No, no.

SI: That was when you bought the farm.

JER: Right.

JR: Yes. Well, his mother, after his father died, why, his mother and his brother were running the farm and his mother didn't want any part of it. It was too much for her to keep books and everything. When you have a farm, you have lots of records you have to keep and send into the government, stating whatever, and she didn't want any part of it and his brother didn't, either. His brother was married and that was a strange arrangement, too. His wife lived in Paterson and

would come home weekends, after they were married, and they didn't want that. They wanted to be together all the time. So, they wanted to go to Florida. That's why we bought the farm, yes, from the estate. Is that on?

SI: Yes, it is still on.

JR: Turn it off.

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----

Reviewed by Edward Todd 4/30/12
Reviewed by Matthew Werblin 4/30/12
Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 7/2/13
Reviewed by Jean Rinehart